NEWS

Planning Board approves Waterfield Special Permit

TARA HUGHES | STAFF WRITER

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The Planning Board has approved the Special Permit for the Waterfield development. COURTESY PHOTO

The Planning Board has unanimously approved the Waterfield development Special Permit subject to conditions.

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A vote on the Special Permit was required Feb. 6 as it was a necessary step before the developer can submit an application for financing with the state, which is due this week.

The public hearing on Waterfield had been ongoing and last week the board finished up with the storm water peer review report and developer response and the design review and response before deliberating and voting.

Caroline Passalacqua, from Weston & Sampson, which conducted the storm water peer review, said a few issues were raised back in November, but most had been addressed by the developer. Any remaining issue(s) could be incorporated as conditions of approval of the Special Permit.

Town Engineer Matthew Shuman also briefly addressed his conditions to be incorporated as condition of approval of the Special Permit. Some of the conditions are required to be addressed prior to the issuance of the Building Permit.

The board then moved on to discussion of the Design Review, done by the town's design consultant Dennis Carlone, of Carlone & Associates, who had previously provided a report detailing design comments or issues.

Joe Haskett, principal at Union Architects, presented a slideshow covering the design review comments and the responses from the Civico team.

"I thought the responses, the written responses, were right on the money," Carlone said, following the presentation. "I think what we have been shown is a good response to those comments."

While he still had a few design recommendations (mostly around colors, materials and lighting/landscaping prior review of which remain conditions of the Special Permit), he said, "This is a quality product. And

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the town, I believe, should be very happy with it. I think it'll be a winner in the town center."

There is, however, an open question for the Select Board. One of the conditions of approval requires that the developer work with the Select Board to attempt to reduce exterior on-site parking (even by 2 spaces) to increase landscaping and green space. The design consultant and the Planning Board members all voiced that more green space would be desirable.

During the meeting it was also noted that the Affordable Housing Trust conveyed "strong support" for the project and urged approval of the Special Permit.

Chair Diab Jarius displayed the letter from the AHT and summarized it for attendees. The letter reminded the Board that "in April 2022 the AHT voted to commit $500,000 of AHT funds as a loan to the project." Saying, "It will also demonstrate to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities that Town resources are supporting the Civico development, an important factor in securing state funding."

After the vote unanimously approving the Waterfield Special Permit, Board member I-Ching Scott said, "And it's such an honor to be voting yes tonight for this."

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‘Chicago: Teen Edition’ dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents “Chicago: Teen Edition,” a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production is set in the 1920s. Performances will take place on March 13 and 14

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Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents ‘Syldason: You Are Welcome Here’

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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